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 FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2081

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 2560

SUBJ: KENNEDY SUBCOMMITTEE STAFF REPORT ON REFUGEE AND
 CIVILIAN WAR CASUALTY PROBLEMS IN INDOCHINA

REF: STATE 159165, 159183, AND 159167

1. STATE 159165 REQUESTS COMMENTS ON FACTS AND MORE GENERAL
 POINTS OF KENNEDY STAFF COMMITTEE REPORT.

2. FIRST STRIKING FACT AS CONCERNS CAMBODIA IS TOTAL OMISSION
 OF CAUSE OF FIGHTING IN CAMBODIA AND OF (#)

THE AGGRESSION BY VC/NVNA. THERE ARE PROBABLY 50,000
 VC/NVNA TROOPS IN CAMBODIA, AND REFUGEE PROBLEM IS DIRECT
 RESULT OF THIS FOREIGN INVASION OF KHMER TERRITORY.

3. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DENY THAT CIVILIANS ARE VICTIMS OF
 WAR AND THAT THERE MAY BE SOME VICTIMS FROM US INTERDICTION
 BOMBING CAMBODIA. BUT MAXIMUM EFFORT IS MADE TO AVOID
 INNOCENT CASUALTIES THROUGH CLOSE LIAISON BETWEEN GOC MILITARY
 COMMANDERS AND FRIENDLY AIR FORCES AND THROUGH WARNINGS ISSUED TO
 LOCAL POPULATION IN ADVANCE INTERDICTIONARY BOMBING.

4. QUESTION OF NUMBERS OF CAMBODIAN REFUGEES FROM OCCUPIED
 OR CONTESTED AREAS NOT EASILY ANSWERED. THEY REPORTEDLY
 NUMBER IN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS BUT MAJORITY LIVE WITH
 RELATIVES. RESULT IS THAT IN PHNOM PENH, FOR EXAMPLE,
 ONLY ABOUT 10,000 CAMBODIANS (AND SOME OF THESE WERE NOT

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REFUGEES BUT FAMILIES OF MILITARY AWAITING HOUSING) HAVE
EVER BEEN IN CAMPS ALTHOUGH GOC STATES CITY HAS ABSORBED
SOME 500,000 REFUGEES.

5. WE ARE SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES
IN GENEVA ARE PREPARING FOR POSSIBLE FAMINE IN 1971. WE WOULD
ASSESS THIS DANGER AS REMOTE EXCEPT IN CERTAIN REGIONS WHICH
MIGHT TEMPORARILY BE CUT OFF FROM SUPPLY SOURCES BY ENEMY
ACTION.

6. REPATRIATION OF VIETNAMESE TO VIETNAM FROM CAMBODIA HAS ENDED
WITH EXCEPTION OF SOME CUT OFF IN INTERIOR OF COUNTRY WHO
ARE BEING REMOVED AS SECURITY SITUATION PERMITS. REMAINING
VIETNAMESE ARE NOT RPT NOT INTERNED IN COMPOUNDS BUT CONTINUE
NORMAL LIVES EXCEPT FOR CURFEW AND PROBABLY SURVEILLANCE.
GOC CONCERN REGARDING THESE PEOPLE QUITE NATURALLY FOCUSED FIRST
ON SECURITY OF CAMBODIA BUT GOC ALSO COOPERATED WITH GVN IN
CARING FOR THEM PRIOR TO THEIR REMOVAL TO SVN.

7. ~~COMMENT~~ THAT ALLEGED CAMBODIAN UNCONCERN SHARED BY USG
OFFICIALS IS TOTALLY WITHOUT FOUNDATION. USG HAS OFFERED
ASSISTANCE THROUGH VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AND HAS PROVIDED AID AS
REQUESTED BY GOC. WE FOLLOW SITUATION AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE
AND MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES
OPERATING CAMBODIA.
SWANK

NOTE: PHNOM PENH 2560; (#) OMISSION CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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